REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 30, 2007. Claims 1, 10 to 19, 23, 32 to 41 and 45 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 23 and 45 are in independent form. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 23 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for alleged failure to comply with the written description requirement. The amended claims are believed to comply with the written description requirement. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112 rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 10 to 19, 23, 32 to 41 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,884,249 (Namba) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,767 (Jackson). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention involves processing different types of information input by a plurality of input units. Information input from any of the plurality of input units is converted into a character string representing the information. A plurality of converted character strings are stored with an input time thereof in a storage unit, and sorted in an order of the input time. A plurality of input concept instances corresponding to the plurality of character strings sorted in the input time order is generated, by referring to knowledge stored in a knowledge base. The knowledge base stores knowledge of each concept which includes a character string representing the concept, a concept type of the concept, a concept instance rule for defining a property of a concept instance to be filled in each slot provided for the concept in correspondence with a slot type of the slot, and a

- 11 -

surface rule for defining an order of a character string representing the concept instance to be filled in each slot and a grammar of the character string representing the concept.

A request information list is generated for each of the plurality of input concept instances. The request information list includes 1) an instance request for filling respective slots with specified concept instances in accordance with the concept instance rule of the input concept instance, 2) a surface request for obeying a specified order of character strings and a specific grammar in accordance with the surface rule of the input concept instance, and 3) a concept definition request which does not overlap with any existing requests in accordance with a different concept instance rule defined in a concept definition for the concept type of the input concept instance.

An applicable request list is generated by generating combinations each of which includes an applicable concept request in the request information list and a corresponding concept instance in the plurality of input concept instances, and excluding a combination which does not satisfy the surface request in the request information list and a combination which includes an applicable concept request competing with other requests from the generated combinations, included from among the request list.

The plurality of input concept instances are unified by filling a slot of one of the input concept instances with another one of the input concept instances having a concept type which matches with the property of the concept instance for the slot by applying an applicable request in the applicable request list.

Applicants submit that the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 23 and 45, and in particular, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of (i) generating a

request information list for each of the plurality of input concept instances, wherein the request information list includes 1) an instance request for filling respective slots with specified concept instances, 2) a surface request for obeying a specified order of character strings and a specific grammar, and 3) a concept definition request which does not overlap with any existing requests in accordance with a different concept instance rule defined in a concept definition for the concept type of the input concept instance, (ii) generating an applicable request list by generating combinations each of which includes an applicable concept request in the request information list and a corresponding concept instance, and excluding a combination which does not satisfy the surface request in the request information list and a combination which includes an applicable concept request competing with other requests from the generated combinations, and (iii) unifying the plurality of input concept instances by applying an applicable request in the applicable request list.

Namba is seen to disclose receiving input from a voice recognition system section 1, a touch-panel section 2, and a keyboard section 3. Plural pieces of input information having a close time stamp with each other are collected as a semantic analyzing section. A semantic analyzing section which coincides with an input semantic analyzing section is searched for from among stored semantic analysis units.

Jackson is seen to disclose referring to an internal specification 240 to interpret an input sequence 260 and output an interpretation 270 in a form corresponding to values for slots.

However, neither Namba nor Jackson, alone or in any permissible combination, is seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 23 and 45.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 1, 23 and 45, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be in condition for allowance.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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